

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

University of Montana Course Syllabi

Open Educational Resources (OER)

---

Spring 2-1-2016

### PSCI 527.01: Performance Measurement

Nancy Gass

*The University Of Montana*, [nancy.gass@umontana.edu](mailto:nancy.gass@umontana.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

#### Recommended Citation

Gass, Nancy, "PSCI 527.01: Performance Measurement" (2016). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 5934.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/5934>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Open Educational Resources (OER) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana Course Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

### Political Science 527 Performance Measurement

Prof. Nancy Gass  
Phone: 406-493-7892  
[Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu](mailto:Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu)

Office: International Center 105  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Class Time: Online

#### Course Description

As used in this course “performance measurement” refers to the process by which organizations routinely and systematically gather data to assess their progress in fulfilling their missions and realizing their visions of excellence. Since the early 1990s it has been touted as the key to “managing for results” and “making public organizations more businesslike.”

This course examines how to identify mission-related outcomes, develop indicators for measuring progress toward achieving those outcomes, and use the resulting data to improve the performance of government and nonprofit agencies. Students are asked to develop a fully integrated performance measurement system for an agency, unit, or program. (This is a simulated exercise; the unit or program must be real but the proposed system is to be your personal invention.)

#### Course Prerequisite

Students must have sufficient knowledge of a government or nonprofit agency/program to be able to design a performance measurement system for it, or at least the ability to obtain that knowledge quickly.

#### Course Objectives

1. To gain a better understanding of the nature and purposes of performance measurement systems and the ideological assumptions on which they rest.
2. To develop skills in designing a performance measurement system.
3. To draw personal conclusions about the value of such systems and whether their benefits outweigh their costs.

#### Required Textbooks

**These books are available for purchase in the UM Bookstore (406.243.1234)**

Harry P. Hatry, Performance Measurement: Getting Results 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 2006).

Patricia Keehley and Neil Abercrombie, Benchmarking in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors: Best Practices for Achieving Performance Breakthroughs (SF: Jossey Bass, 2008).

All other required readings may be found in the appropriate Learning Unit in Moodle.

**Course Requirements**

Learning Unit readings and Discussion Forum responses must be completed *each* Sunday night by 8:00pm (Mountain Standard Time). Students are required to read the mini-lectures, all required readings, participate in the Discussion Forum, and complete all writing assignments by the established times. Learning Units provide “*Learning Points*” based on what the instructor and authors are trying to emphasize as key elements for the student to learn and understand. These are not to be considered all-inclusive and the student is responsible for utilizing these “*Learning Points*” in conjunction with the readings in developing their understanding and competency.

**Writing Assignments**

Six (6) writing assignments are required for successful completion of this course. Writing Assignments 2-5 will be used as the basis for Writing Assignment 6, your Final Performance Measurement Report. Students are required to follow the instructions contained in the relevant Learning Unit for each assignment. In your writing assignments, **points will be subtracted for occurrences of the following:**

- **single sentence paragraph;**
- **verb-subject disagreement;**
- **run-on sentence;**
- **sentence fragment (incomplete sentence);**
- **use of contractions; and**
- **misspellings.**

**NOTE:** These assignments require you to pretend you have been asked by a higher level administrator or board member to investigate and propose a performance measurement system for your program or unit (not the agency as a whole unless it is very small). Consequently, it is to be written in the form of an internal, technical report, i.e. succinct and to the point. You are to make it as realistic as possible but you are not expected to submit it to your agency.

Writing assignments shall be **submitted in Moodle** in a doc or docx format no later than the date due prior to 8:00pm MST. If you are going to be late with an assignment, please let me know in advance of the due date and time. Failure to notify the instructor of a late assignment in advance of the due date will result in points being deducted.

**Course Grading:**

Grading is based on six (6) writing assignments and your responses to the Discussion Forum questions. Writing Assignments 1-5 are worth 20 points each and Writing Assignment 6 is

worth 100 points. Discussion Forum responses are worth 20 points for a total of 220 semester points.

The Discussion Forum requires active student participation, which means you must complete:

- Step 1)** Respond to the Discussion Forum questions presented; and
- Step 2)** Respond to other student responses (not all other student responses, but several for each Discussion Forum question.
- Step 3)** You must complete Step 1 and Step 2 to receive full credit for the Discussion Forum.

If you are curious as to how you are doing on your Discussion Forum questions during the semester, you may email me at any time.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

A =	205-220	B- =	176-182	D+ =	147-153
A- =	198-204	C+ =	169-175	D =	139-146
B+ =	191-197	C =	161-168	D- =	132-138
B =	183-190	C- =	154-160	F =	0-131

**This is a graduate level course and assignments and Discussion Forum participation should reflect a graduate level of thought and effort.** Assignments will be graded based on your presentation of your knowledge and understanding of the concepts being presented. This includes your ability to interpret, comprehend, analyze, apply and explain these concepts. Demonstrate in your responses that you have grasped what the readings and mini-lectures have presented and that you know how to apply it.

Discussion Forums will be assessed based on your response:

- Does it address the question asked;
- Does the response reflect an understanding of the concept or question; and
- Is it based not only on what you have been presented, but also includes insights that you have and can justify.

The Discussion Forum provides each student with the opportunity for self-assessment. **By reading others responses and discussion the topic with them in the Discussion Forum, you can assess your understanding.**

### **Office Hours and Availability**

You may contact me anytime you so desire and I am also available to you by appointment. My office is located in the International Center, Room 105. To schedule an office appointment with me, please email me at [Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu](mailto:Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu).

**Phone:** You may **contact me via phone at 406-493-7892 at any time**. This is my cell phone number and I have it on 24/7. If I do not answer, you may leave a message and I will call you back as soon as possible.

**Email:** You may **email me at any time** at [Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu](mailto:Nancy.Gass@umontana.edu). I will make every effort to respond within 24 hours of receiving your email. The only time it may take longer to respond is if you email me on a weekend. If I do not have access to the Internet, it may be Monday before I respond to you.

Again, I want to reiterate...**do not hesitate** to call, email, or drop by my office. I am here to enhance your learning experience.

### **Other Student Resources**

There are other resources available on the course homepage in Moodle. Here are some other sites that may be valuable to you. If you need ADA assistance in taking this course, you may contact the University of Montana Disability Services for Students at their website <http://life.umt.edu/dss> or email them at [dss@umontana.edu](mailto:dss@umontana.edu). Students taking this course are expected to do so under the provisions set forth in the UM Student Conduct Code. If you go to <http://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode> you can review the Student Conduct Code. There is one other service available to you through **The Writing Center** - they offer free one-on-one online tutoring "to all students seeking to become more effective writers. You can email them at [onlinetutoring@umontana.edu](mailto:onlinetutoring@umontana.edu) or point your browser to <http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter>.

### **University Email Address**

**University policy requires that all papers be returned to your University email address. Make sure you check that address for returned papers.**

### **Weekly Assignments**

❖ ***January 25 – 31, 2016***

#### ***Learning Unit 1: Introduction to Performance Measurement Course***

Read the mini-lecture and participate in the Discussion Forum.

❖ ***February 1 – February 7, 2016***

#### ***Learning Unit 2: An Introduction to Performance Management***

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, participate in the Discussion Forum and begin working on Writing Assignment 1.

## Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Preface and Chapter 1, Pages xiii-12

*Reading 1 (Moodle)* Reinventing Government, Osborne and Gaebler, Chapter 5, Pages 138-165

❖ **February 8 – February 14, 2016****Learning Unit 3: The 4 Major Types of Performance Evaluation**

Writing Assignment 1 Due February 14

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and submit Writing Assignment 1 (This lesson asks you to review several examples of performance reports/audits).

*Note: No Discussion Forum Questions to respond to this week.*

## Required Reading:

See specific instructions under Writing Assignment 1 in the Learning Unit or in **Writing Assignment and Due Dates** within the **Course Materials** toggle.

**1. Summative Program Evaluations.** Although the term has now become almost synonymous with “performance measurement,” strictly speaking formal program evaluation involves rigorous scientific research (often using experimental or quasi-experimental research designs) and is a one-time-only study. Seek to determine its unique distinguishing features by reading the Executive Summary to “An Outcome Evaluation of the Forever Free Substance Abuse Treatment Program” at the following link. Read only the Executive Summary, pp. iv-x.

[www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/199685.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/199685.pdf)

**2. Performance Audits.** Here you will find that the auditors have to devise unique methodologies based on what questions they have been asked to address; typically the methodologies are not highly scientific.

- a. Go to the U.S. Government Accountability Office web page [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov). Read/skim one of the “Recently Issued Reports,” Look for distinctive features as noted above.
- b. Go to the Montana Legislative Audit Division web page [www.leg.mt.gov/css/audit/Default.asp](http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/audit/Default.asp). Click on “audit reports” and then on “recently released reports”. Read/skim any report of interest to you, but note that there are three kinds: financial compliance, performance, and information systems.

**3. Statistical Reports.** Go to the Montana Highway Patrol web page <https://dojmt.gov/highwaypatrol/forms>. Click on “Forms and Other Documents” on the right margin, then click on “annual reports/2014”.

**4. Continuous Performance Measurement.** The first example involves a Forest Service Performance Report that is required by the Government Performance Results Act of 1993 and thus is an example of the “top-down accountability and control” approach. The second is an example of a student paper written for this course that follows the “empowerment-based, pursuit of excellence” approach.

The 2004 Forest Service Performance Report is found at [www.fs.fed.us/plan/par/2004/](http://www.fs.fed.us/plan/par/2004/). Click on “Annual Performance Report” on the right margin. Notice how it cascades from goals, to strategic outcomes to strategic objectives to performance measures. For Juliette Olejnik’s student paper, look for it in Moodle under the Student Sample toggle.

❖ **February 15 – 21, 2016****Learning Unit 4: Outcome Sequence Charts: Activities and Outputs**

Writing Assignment 2 Due February 21

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, participate in the Discussion Forum, and submit writing assignment 2.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapters 2 and 3, Pages 13-37

Benchmarking in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors: Best Practices for Achieving Performance Breakthroughs, Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapters 1-2 (skim Chapter 1), Pages 11-45

❖ **February 22 – 28, 2016**

**Learning Unit 5: Outcome Sequence Charts: Performance Outcomes**

Writing Assignment 3 Due February 28

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, participate in the Discussion Forum, and submit writing assignment 3.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapters 4 and 5, Pages 39-58

❖ **February 29 – March 6, 2016**

**Learning Unit 6: Outcome Sequence Charts: Measureable Indicators and Data Collection**

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and participate in the Discussion Forum.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapter 6 & 7, Pages 59-117

❖ **March 7– March 13, 2016**

**Learning Unit 7: Outcome Sequence Charts: Benchmarks (Targets and Standards)**

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and participate in the Discussion Forum.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapter 8 & 9, Pages 121-152

Benchmarking in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors: Best Practices for Achieving Performance Breakthroughs, Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapter 3, Pages 49-62.

❖ **March 14 – 20, 2016**

**Learning Unit 8: Outcome Sequence Charts: Benchmarks (Continued)**

Writing Assignment 4 Due March 20

Complete the required reading (no mini lecture this week), participate in the Discussion Forum, and submit writing assignment 4.

Required Reading:

Benchmarking in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors: Best Practices for Achieving Performance Breakthroughs, Keehley and Abercrombie, Chapters 5 and 6, Pages 85-125

Play around with Oregon's statewide benchmarks at [www.benchmarks.oregon.gov/](http://www.benchmarks.oregon.gov/) [if this does not work, just Google Oregon Shines] - sorry, they keep moving the link

❖ **March 21 – 27, 2016**

**Learning Unit 9: Using and Analyzing Performance Data**

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and participate in the Discussion Forum.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapter 10, Pages 153-173.

❖ **March 28 – April 3, 2016**

**Learning Unit 10: Reporting Performance Data**

Writing Assignment 5 Due April 3

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and submit writing assignment 5. No Discussion Forum this week.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapters 11 & 12, Pages 175-227.

❖ **April 4 – April 10, 2016 (Spring Break)**

**Learning Unit 11: NO CLASS & NO ASSIGNMENTS**

Enjoy your break!

❖ **April 11 – 17, 2016**

**Learning Unit 12: Results Based Budgeting**

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and participate in the Discussion Forum.



Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapter 13, Pages 229-264.

❖ ***April 18 – 24, 2016***

***Learning Unit 13: Quality Management and Continuous Improvement***

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, and participate in the Discussion Forum.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapter 14, Pages 267-286

❖ ***April 25 – May 1, 2016***

***Learning Unit 14: Ensuring System Integrity and Course Review***

Read the mini-lecture, complete the required reading, participate in the Discussion Forum and begin working on writing assignment 6 – Final Performance Measurement Report.

Required Reading:

Performance Measurement: Getting Results, Harry Hatry, Chapters 14 and 15, Pages 287-311.

❖ ***May 2 - 8, 2016***

***Learning Unit 15: Course Review***

FINAL Writing Assignment 6 due May 8

Required Reading:

None

❖ ***May 9-13, 2016***

***Learning Unit 16: Conclusion***

Read the mini-lecture and participate in the Discussion Forum.

There is no final exam in this class; just participate in the Final Discussion Forum. Good luck on your remaining finals and enjoy your summer!

Required Reading:

None